

ART. XVIII.—*Report of the Standing Sanatory Committee of the Board of Health of the City of New York, on the subject of Asiatic Cholera, at present prevailing at the Quarantine establishment of New York at Staten Island.* New York, 1848: pp. 24.

THIS is a highly interesting and valuable document, furnishing another to the many remarkable instances already recorded, of an outbreak of cholera under most unexpected circumstances, and the conveyance of the disease to a distinct locality.

Dr. Whiting, in his interesting letter, which forms the principal portion of this report, gives the following account of the outbreak of cholera on board the packet ship New York, as obtained from her first officer Captain Lines, with the history of the disease, after the arrival of the ship at quarantine, as observed by himself.

On the second of December, the packet ship New York arrived at quarantine with a number of persons sick, having lost seven during the last week of her voyage, with a disease that has since proved to be Asiatic cholera. The New York left Havre on the ninth of November, with three hundred and thirty-one steerage passengers, twenty-one cabin, and thirty-three crew; a total of three hundred and eighty-five. All continued well until the twenty-fifth, Saturday, when one of the steerage passengers, a German, aged twenty-nine, in robust health, was attacked with vomiting and purging, accompanied by cramps of the muscles of the upper and lower extremities. The Captain supposed it to be cholera morbus, and prescribed judiciously for the symptoms, but they continued until the third day, when death occurred.

The next case was on the 26th, Sunday, when an old man aged sixty-two, in feeble health, was attacked with vomiting and purging, with coldness of the whole body, and violent cramps and spasms. He died on the second day after the attack. Monday and Tuesday, 27th and 28th, two cases occurred. A girl, aged five years, died in two hours, and a boy also, aged five, died in four and a half hours after their first attack, both perfectly well previously. Wednesday, 28th, a man, aged forty, was attacked at 8 o'clock A. M., and died at 3 P. M. of the same day. On Thursday two children sickened and died, after six and eight hours illness.

The ship came to anchor at quarantine on Friday night, and from that time until Sunday noon, when the passengers were landed, twelve new cases occurred.

The best means of arresting the spread of the disease appeared to Dr. W. to be to remove them from the confinement of the ship, and to separate the sick from the well. A steamboat was engaged to bring them to the public store docks. The sick were sent to an excellent hospital room, and good nursing and medical attendance immediately provided.

A remarkable feature in the history of this disease, is the fact that six persons have been affected in a similar way, who had been but for two days exposed to contact or proximity to these people.

Nothing like cholera existed at Staten Island at the time of the arrival of the ship New York. When her passengers were removed to the public stores, they were occupied by about seventy persons, who had just recovered from other diseases. One of these, a man just recovering from a fractured patella, assisted in the removal of the patients. This was on Sunday; on the Wednesday following, he was attacked with violent symptoms of cholera, and died the same day. A woman who had been a nurse, without having any communication with these people, but occupying another room in the same building, was attacked, and died the same day, with all the symptoms of cholera. A man who had been discharged and gone to the city of New York on Monday, and had remained a *little over a day* in this same enclosure, was returned from the city as a case of cholera, and died also on Wednesday. On perceiving this communication of the disease to the convalescents, Dr. W. immediately sent them away and distributed them through the other hospitals, since which three others have been attacked,

two of whom have died, but none other than those at first exposed at the public stores, have been affected. These had all been inmates of the hospital for weeks, were ready to be discharged, and had but a limited exposure for forty-eight hours to the influences of the disease. Two convalescents from typhous fever were subsequently attacked.

What is extremely curious also is that:—

All the persons who have been attacked, from the first case on board ship to the last, excepting the inmates of the hospital, have been from among two hundred and seventy Germans,* who have been living in Havre and its environs, where there has not been a single case of cholera. These persons were originally from Germany, mechanics, and flourishing, until, by the triumph of liberty and equality, the native French artisans have succeeded in inducing the public to withdraw their patronage, and the municipal authorities to proscribe them.

No circumstances can be ascertained to explain the circumstance of these Germans being the exclusive victims. They were all healthy and robust, had not been exposed to cholera at home; they enjoyed with the other passengers the best accommodations, and their provisions were abundant and of the best quality.

The whole number of cases, including twelve taken from the ship, was on the 19th December, 63, of which 29 had died.

The disease has since entirely disappeared from quarantine, and without extending to the city of New York, or to its neighbourhood.

ART. XIX.—*Report of a Joint Special Committee of Select and Common Councils, (appointed on the 7th December, 1848,) to whom was referred certain queries contained in a Circular Letter from the American Medical Association, on the subject of Public Hygiène. Published by order of Councils. Philadelphia, 1849: pp. 39, 8vo.*

THIS interesting report, for a copy of which we are indebted to the politeness of the chairman of the committee, C. A. Poulson, Esq., contains a mass of valuable information relative to the actual state of the city of Philadelphia proper; its means and resources for preserving health; its cleanliness, ventilation, and other matters having a bearing on its hygienic condition. It is our purpose at present merely to invite attention to this report; hereafter we shall have occasion to refer to it, more particularly in a review on the hygiene of American cities, in preparation for a future number of this Journal.

ART. XX.—*Summary of the Transactions of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. From Sept. 16, 1848, to Jan. 2, 1849, inclusive. 8vo., pp. 28.*

THE present number fully maintains the character of this valuable publication. It contains the annual reports on the Theory and Practice of Medicine by Dr. B. Coates, and on Midwifery by Dr. Griscom; an obituary notice of the late Dr. Henry Neill, by Dr. J. M. Paul; and reports of highly interesting conversations on the prevailing diseases of last autumn and the influence of the weather in their production; on the prevailing variolous epidemic; on the protective power of vaccination; on hydrophobia; with abstracts of several interesting cases communicated to the College. We shall endeavour to find room in our Domestic Summary for notices of some of the articles.

* Except one, a Frenchman from Paris.